

NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Block Island School

March 21, 2011

7:00 p.m.

The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Monday, March 21, 2011, in the media center of the Block Island School. Chair William Padien called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. The following members were present: Elizabeth Connor, Patricia Doyle, Annie Hall, Sean McGarry, and William Padien. Robert Hicks was also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

A motion (Connor, Hall) to approve the minutes of the meeting held on February 7, 2011, as presented carried with a vote of 5-0.

Reports

William Padien reported that the town has currently budgeted only \$55,000 of the \$125,000 the school requested for next fiscal year. He told the Town Council that, with this small increase, programs and staff may have to be cut.

Sean McGarry reported that the next RIASC professional development session is scheduled for Saturday, March 26 and members can earn three credits toward school committee certification.

Mr. Hicks stated that the Rhode Island Department of Education held back the data release on UCOA. He did review draft data as percentages of the budget and was surprised at how close we are with other districts.

Shannon Morgan and Jill Seppa reported on the first year of the cultural activities program. Due to weather and scheduling issues only four trips occurred this year, including a behind the scenes look at the Newport mansions, the international car show where students learned about green technology, indoor rock climbing, and an on-island day where they hiked the Ocean View Foundation, learned the history of ceramics, and participated in NIA and yoga classes. Feedback from the teachers included the trips weren't cultural, not knowing which students were attending, and having students participate in after school programs to prepare them for the upcoming trips, (learning about green technology and ceramics before the trip). It was requested by both coordinators that academic eligibility requirements for participation be made clearer to them. Feedback from students included being part of something, trying new things, and learning a lot about every day things. Using the same bus transportation as the basketball teams saved money, but was difficult to navigate, leaving them little time at some places. Committee members thanked Ms Morgan and Ms Seppa for their presentation and in continuing to develop the program.

The Standing of Accounts through February 28, 2011, was presented for School Committee review. Mr. Hicks reported that he expects to have a fund balance at the end of the fiscal year, but not as much as he earlier anticipated. The first Medicaid reimbursement was received, but

for half of the expected amount. A motion (Padien, Connor) to approve the standing of accounts through February 28, 2001, carried with a vote of 5-0.

Old Business

Mr. Hicks reported that there were several factors putting our adopted budget at risk. The Town Manager has suggested a budget that is \$70,640 less than we requested, an eight percent increase was budgeted for Blue Cross but came in at 12.6 percent, fuel costs are anticipated to be \$8,000 higher, and Medicaid reimbursement will be down by \$30,000. The anticipated net shortfall is \$127,827. Mr. Hicks is hoping to join the health care pool at Interlocal Trust, which has a lower administration fee, and has a conference call scheduled with them tomorrow morning. The Town Council has been asked to consider additional revenue for us, but if this is not forthcoming Mr. Hicks does not see a way to cover the shortfall without a substantial reduction in programs. It was suggested that the context and timelines of capital projects could be revisited. Committee members would prefer not to take any capital projects out of the budget, but would do this before cutting programs or positions. Mr. McGarry felt that we should go forward with the original request and let the voters decide. If necessary the capital items could be removed from the school's budget and handed back to the town. Mr. Hicks will continue to work on the problem between now and the financial town meeting.

New Business

A motion (Hall, Padien) to approve the request from Eileen and Steve Miller to home school their son, Andre, from March 25 through April 5, 2011, while on an extended family vacation carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, McGarry) to approve the tuition requests received from Lauri McTeague, Bonnie Swinton, Megan Hennessy, and Kate Mello for the course they are taking through URI (EDC922: Workshop for Teachers – MCG: Technology Infused Classroom and Curriculum) pursuant to the terms and conditions of the School Committee/Teachers' Contract carried with a vote of 5-0.

A resolution on binding arbitration was submitted for School Committee review and read into the record by Sean McGarry. Even though the legislative hearings on this item are over, it would be nice to have it on file because binding arbitration does come up every so often. A motion (McGarry, Padien) to approve the resolution on binding arbitration as presented carried with a vote of 5-0.

The Transforming Education in RI resolution was tabled until Mr. Hicks has a chance to review it.

A motion (Padien, McGarry) to consent to the appointment of Kirk Littlefield as the head coach for the varsity softball team for the 2011 season carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, McGarry) to consent to the appointment of John Tarbox as the head coach for the varsity baseball team for the 2011 season carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, McGarry) to consent to the appointment of Doug Michel as the co-assistant coach for the varsity baseball team for the 2011 season carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, McGarry) to consent to the appointment of Matthew Moran as the co-assistant coach for the varsity baseball team for the 2011 season carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, McGarry) to consent to the appointment of Robert Closter as the head coach for the junior high baseball team for the 2011 season carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, McGarry) to consent to the appointment of Chris O'Neill as the assistant coach for the junior high baseball team for the 2011 season carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, McGarry) to consent to the appointment of Chris O'Neill as the head coach for the junior high softball team for the 2011 season carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, McGarry) to consent to the appointment of Robert Closter as the assistant coach for the junior high baseball team for the 2011 season carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Doyle) to consent to the appointment of Victoria Clark as the assistant varsity softball coach pending receipt of her certification and a favorable criminal background check carried with a vote of 4-1 with Sean McGarry voting in the negative.

A letter of resignation/non-renewal of contract was received from Yordanka Martin from her position as Finance Director effective upon the expiration of her contract on June 30, 2011. A motion (Padien, McGarry) to accept the resignation of Yordanka Martin with deep regret, but with congratulations on doing a fabulous job and for getting into the program at Yale carried with a vote of 5-0.

A proposed calendar for the 2011-2012 school year, which mirrors the current calendar, was submitted for School Committee review. It was suggested by Elizabeth Connor that perhaps a survey could be sent to the staff and parents to see if we could do away with the April vacation in exchange for several long weekends in March and April. The calendar is scheduled to be adopted at the April meeting.

Calendar of Events

A calendar of events for the months of March and April 2011 was submitted for School Committee information. The next regular meeting is scheduled for April 11, 2011. The Town Council will be holding a budget workshop on April 4 with adoption scheduled for April 6.

Correspondence

A memorandum was forwarded for School Committee information on the formation of a committee to examine ways to reduce absenteeism, including allowing our students to participate in athletic contests without undermining class time.

Executive Session

A motion (Padien, McGarry) at 9:23 p.m. to go into executive session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 42-46-4, 5(a)(1) for performance evaluation and (2) for contract negotiations carried with a vote of 5-0. It was noted for the record that the required written notification was provided.

Open Session

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 9:44 p.m. to return to open session carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to seal the minutes of the executive session carried with a vote of 5-0.

Superintendent's Contract

For the past two years Mr. Hicks has been working on year-to-year contracts but has requested that the School Committee consider a three-year contract, which would run from July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2014. A motion (Padien, Connor) to submit a contract for the superintendent starting July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2014, with the third year of the contract to include single health insurance benefits was amended to read as follows. A motion (Padien, Connor) to submit a contract for the superintendent starting July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2014, carried with a vote of 5-0. The contract terms will be developed and presented to the School Committee for approval.

Town Employees' Contract

A motion (McGarry, Hall) to approve the Tentative Agreement with the Employees' Association as presented carried with a vote of 5-0.

Adjournment

A motion (Padien, Doyle) at 9:49 p.m. to adjourn carried with a vote of 5-0.

Date approved

Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk